

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MUNICH 04463 291520Z
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL MUNICH
TO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
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USMISSION USBERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GW
SUBJECT: BAVARIAN FDP CHAIRMAN ADVOCATES ADOPTION OF
NEW COURSE TOWARD CSU

1. INTRO AND SUMMARY. BAVARIAN FDP CHAIRMAN AND FEDERAL
MIN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE JOSEF ERTL HAS CALLED ON HIS
PARTY TO CHANGE ITS BASIC POLITICAL STRATEGY AS IT GOES
INTO THE OCTOBER 1978 BAVARIAN LANDTAG ELECTIONS. HERETO-
FORE, FDP IN BAVARIA HAS PRESENTED ITSELF TO BAVARIAN
VOTERS AS TOTALLY OPPOSED TO CSU BUT WILLING TO COALESCE
WITH SPD IF SPD/FDP COALITION ABLE TO OBTAIN MAJORITY IN
BAVARIAN LANDTAG. IN PUBLIC STATEMENT ANALYZING BAVARIAN
POLITICAL SITUATION IN LIGHT OF APPROACHING LANDTAG
ELECTIONS, ERTL ARGUES THAT FDP MUST FOLLOW A POLICY
WHICH WOULD ENABLE IT TO COALESCE (ON LAND LEVEL) WITH
CSU. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 MUNICH 04463 291520Z

2. ERTL'S ARGUMENT FOR CHANGE IN FDP STRATEGY IN BAVARIA
IS AS FOLLOWS: BASIC GOAL OF FDP IS TO PREVENT ANY SINGLE
PARTY FROM WINNING ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN BAVARIAN LANDTAG;
MOST IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC OF PRESENT POLITICAL
SITUATION IN BAVARIA IS SAD INTERNAL STATE OF SPD (HERE
ERTL CLEARLY IMPLIES THAT SPD IS UNLIKELY FOR SOME TIME

TO COME TO WIN ENOUGH VOTES TO MAKE AN SPD/FDP GOVERNMENT MATHEMATICALLY POSSIBLE); THEREFORE, ANYONE WHO WISHES TO SEE FDP PARTICIPAIN BAVARIAN GOVERNMENT MUST CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF A COALTION WITH THE CSU EVEN IF THIS SHOULD BE POSSIBLE ONLY IN THE 1980'S; ONLY OTHER ALTERNATIVE IS FOR FDP HERE TO RESIGN ITSELF TO ROLE OF OPPOSITION "FOR DECADES."

3. IN HIS STATEMENT, ERTL ALSO ASSERTS FLATLY THAT HIS PARTY MUST PROCEED ON ASSUMPTION THAT FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS WILL BE MIN PRESIDENT OF BAVARIA FOR SEVERAL LEGISLATIVE PERIODS. THIS MEANS THAT FDP MUST THINK IN TERMS OF ITS RELATIONS WITH A STRAUSS-LED BAVARIAN GOVERNMENT. THESE RELATIONS WILL, SAYS ERTL, DEPEND ON MANNER IN WHICH STRAUSS CONDUCTS HIS OFFICE.

4. COMMENT. ERTL IS A REALIST WHO RECOGNIZES THAT FDP'S SURVIVAL AS A VIABLE PARTY IN BAVARIAN LAND POLITICS MAY HAVE BEEN JEOPARDIZED BY ITS STRATEGY OF BEING WILLING TO COALESCE WITH THE SPD. IN 1974 BAVARIAN LANDTAG ELECTIONS, WHEN FDP PLEDGED ITSELF IN ADVANCE TO AN ATTEMPT TO FORM COALITION WITH SPD, WERE ALMOST DISASTEROUS. FDP OBTAINED ONLY 5.2 PERCENT OF VOTE, BARELY CLEARING THE 5 PERCENT HURDLE. ERTL SEEMS TO HAVE CONCLUDED THAT HIS PARTY'S BEST HOPE FOR SURVIVAL IN THE 1978 LANDTAG ELECTIONS, I.E. REMAINING ABOVE THE 5 PERCENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MUNICH 04463 291520Z

BARRIER, LIES IN ATTRACTING VOTERS WHO REFUSE TO SUPPORT SPD HERE, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, BUT ARE NOT REPEAT NOT PREPARED TO SWITCH TO CSU.

5. IF ERTL SUCCEEDS IN PERSUADING FDP HERE TO EMBRACE HIS NEW STRATEGY, THIS COULD GENERATE SOME REVERBERATIONS IN OTHER LAENDER. BETTS

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 29-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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